



# ***Halloween Safety***



Trick-or-treating on Halloween can be fun and safe if basic safety rules are followed.

## **Ensure costumes:**

- Are not flammable (labeled "flame-retardant")
  - Do not impair their vision, restrict movement, cause tripping, have sharp areas or corners.
  - Do not include accessories fastened with cloth ties instead of Velcro (capas around necks, etc)
  - Are light colored-easily seen by motorists or place reflective tape on the front, back, and sides of the costume.
- It is recommended that nontoxic face paint be used, instead of masks that limit visibility.

## **Treats:**

- Tell children not to eat treats until the parents have inspected them.
- Feed them prior to trick-or-treating, so they will be less tempted to eat the treats.
- Parents should carefully examine all treats, before allowing children to eat them.
- Look for anything unusual or suspicious.
- Look for loose wrappers, broken seals, pinholes, or packages that appear to have been glued back together.
- Report any such suspicious situations to the police.
- Do not give homemade or unwrapped treats to children, unless they were made by someone you know.
- Thoroughly wash fruit and then slice it into small pieces, to check for foreign objects, and chop fruit before eating.



**Tell trick-or-treaters to:**

- Be home at a certain time.
- Follow a parent designated route.
- Not trick-or-treat alone.
- Carry a lit flashlight, so they can see hazards in the street and other persons and so drivers can see them.
- Cross only at street corners, never between parked cars.
- Look all directions before crossing, and walk, not run, across.
- Walk on sidewalks not in the street.
- Walk, don't run, from house to house.
- Avoid walking through yards, where ornaments, holes, clotheslines, etc. present dangers.
- Not accept rides from strangers.
- Not approach cars or accept treats from persons in a car.
- Not take shortcuts through alleys, parks, or backyards.
- Not go into a stranger's home.
- Avoid homes without porch lights on.
- Call home or the police, if they encounter anything threatening.

**Adults should:**

- Allow their children to trick-or-treat only in familiar places.
- Accompany younger children when trick-or-treating.
- Leave porch lights on, to welcome trick-or-treaters.
- Keep dogs and other pets away from doors, so children will not be frightened.
- Use flashlights, not candles, to light jack-o-lanterns.
- Remove anything from your yard that may present a hazard, such as lawn decorations.
- Drive very carefully during trick-or-treating hours. Watch for children darting into roadway.



# Thanksgiving Safety

Thanksgiving is also the time of year where kitchen and food safety need emphasis. Home fires and other tragedies occur every year during the holidays. See Kitchen safety on page 33 for basic cooking safety.

**For those who cook deep-fried turkey, here are some important safety tips:**

- Many units easily tip over.
- If the cooking pot is overfilled with oil, the oil may overflow when the turkey is placed into pot. Oil may hit burner and cause a fire.
- Partially frozen turkeys placed into the fryer can cause a spillover effect. This too, may result in an extensive fire.
- With no thermostat controls, the units also have the potential to overheat the oil to the point of combustion.
- The sides of the cooking pot, lid and pot handles get dangerously hot, posing severe burn hazards.
- Turkey fryers should always be used outdoors a safe distance from buildings and any other material that can burn.
- Never use turkey fryers on wooden decks or in garages.
- Make sure the fryers are used on a flat surface to reduce accidental tipping.
- Never leave the fryer unattended. Most units do not have thermostat controls. If you don't watch the fryer carefully, the oil will continue to heat until it catches fire.
- Never let children or pets near the fryer when in use. Even after use, never allow children or pets near the turkey fryer. The oil inside the cooking pot can remain dangerously hot, even hours after use.
- Use well-insulated potholders or oven mitts when touching pot or lid handles.
- Make sure the turkey is completely thawed and be careful with marinades. Oil and water don't mix, and water causes oil to spill over, causing a fire or even an explosion hazard.
- The National Turkey Federation recommends refrigerator thawing and to allow approximately 24 hours for every five pounds of bird thawed in the refrigerator.
  - Keep an all-purpose fire extinguisher nearby. Never use water to extinguish a grease fire. Remember to use your best judgment when attempting to fight a fire. If the fire is manageable, use an all-purpose fire extinguisher. If the fire increases, immediately call 9-1-1 for help.
  - Never allow children or pets near the turkey fryer. Oil remains hot, even hours after use.





## ***Christmas Tree and Holiday Decoration Safety***

As the holidays draw near, decorative lighting and special effects become important components of the season. Christmas trees, in particular, are a traditional part of the season. And although they are special, trees pose a definite safety risk. If you're using a natural tree this year reduce the risk of a tree fire by taking the following precautions.

### **Safety Tips for a happy Holiday Season:**

- If you choose a fresh tree ensure it actually is fresh and not one that has dried out through weeks of storage. If you are buying one from a tree lot, tap the trunk on the ground; if several needles fall off, it's too dry. Needles that bend and are not easily pulled off indicate a fresh tree. Consider a potted Christmas tree so you can plant it in your yard once the holidays are over. Realize that a 6' tree needs about 1 gallon of water every two days. Check the water level every day.
- Before setting it up, cut two inches diagonally off the butt. The tree will draw water more easily from a fresh cut.
- Select a safe location for the tree, away from drapes and curtains and from drying and heating sources such as registers, radiators, and television sets. Don't block doors or windows which might be used to escape in an emergency and never put a tree near a fireplace!
- Use a tree-stand with widespread legs for better balance and a large water reserve in which to immerse the tree butt. Check the water level every day and add more as required.
- Keep tree away from floor heaters, fire places, or other heat sources.
- Check your lights for defects. Spread them out on a non- flammable surface before installing them. Make sure there are no broken bulbs, all electrical cords are free of cuts or frays and the plugs are in good condition. Use only UL-listed lights, and no more than 3 strands linked together.
- Extension cords should never be placed where they could be a tripping hazard.
- Don't leave the Christmas tree lights on if there is no one in the room.
- If the tree begins to lose an excessive amount of needles, remove it immediately.



## Holiday lights and decorations:

- Inspect your home after decorating to locate any hazards of fire, electric shock or falls.
- When visiting relatives or attending community events, check the surroundings for hazards and help correct them to protect your children and others.
- Never leave candles unattended.
- Keep extension cords from becoming a tripping hazard.
- Place breakable decorations and ornaments out of reach for children.
- Instruct children that lights and decorations are for viewing, not touching.
- Install a smoke detector or new batteries in the one(s) you have and TEST it.
- Use only outdoor lights outside your home.
- Examine light strings each year, discard worn ones.
- Fasten the bulbs securely and point the sockets down to avoid moisture build up.
- Connect no more than three strands together.
- Never use indoor extension cords outside.
- Avoid overloading wall outlets and extension cords.
- Keep outdoor electrical connectors above ground and out of puddles and snow.
- Remember to supervise children closely. Don't let the distractions of guests keep you from watching them.

